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**Illinois
State Board of
Education**

Illinois
Vocational
Curriculum
Center

East
Central
Network

DACUM

**Developing
A
Curriculum**

Introduction

This brochure is provided to give an overview of the DACUM technique of occupational analysis.



Terminology

Curriculum development terminology can be ambiguous because practitioners use many terms interchangeably. For purposes of working with DACUM, the following definitions are used:

Occupational Analysis

Identification of job duties and tasks, also called job analysis, by incumbent workers.

Task Analysis

Identification of the steps, knowledge required, tools, safety factors and performance standards related to one or more tasks.

Job Duty Areas

Arbitrary groupings of related tasks, 6-12 per job.

Job Tasks

Specific, observable units of work, stated in performance terminology, observable and performed in a limited period of time; usually 6-30 per duty area.

Steps

Specific elements or activities required to perform a task; at least two per task.

DACUM

Short version of **Developing A Curriculum**; a Structured Group Interview technique to do Occupational Analysis.

Incumbent Workers

Persons currently employed in the job being analyzed.

DACUM Chart

A task list broken down by duty areas.

DACUM Background

In the 1970s DACUM was researched and refined as a quick, low cost way to develop task lists using a committee of incumbent workers. Canadian post secondary institutions use DACUM widely and have provided a major source of information on this Structured Group Interview technique.

Secondary and post secondary institutions in the United States have recently become interested in DACUM because of its success in developing a current task list by business and industry representatives in a short period of time compared with other commonly used occupational analysis techniques.



Philosophy

DACUM is based on the philosophy that:

- Expert workers are better able to describe/define their occupation than anyone else.
- Any job can be effectively and sufficiently described in terms of the tasks successful workers in that occupation perform.
- All tasks have direct implications for the knowledge and attitudes that workers must have in order to perform the tasks correctly.

What Is The DACUM Process?

DACUM is a Structured Group Interview technique which is highly refined to accomplish occupational analysis resulting in a validated task list. The principles used in the Structured Group Interview technique are also successfully used to verify task lists.

A trained facilitator is needed in the DACUM process. Facilitators must be skilled in competency based curriculum development and in group processing and must receive special training. The facilitator works with a DACUM committee to produce a DACUM Chart.

Specific group processing techniques are used to assure the participation of each of the carefully selected committee members. Duty areas, also called general areas of competence, are identified first. Tasks are then identified for each duty area. Duty areas and tasks may include only psychomotor skills or may include identification of cognitive and affective (including basic and employability) skills, depending on the philosophy of the institution.

DACUM Committees of 6-10 incumbent workers are carefully screened and selected to participate in the 2 to 3-day DACUM Occupational Analysis meeting.

A set of cards is used to write out specific duties and tasks after the committee comes to consensus on each. The cards are arranged on a wall and allow flexibility in changing and modifying the task list.

Trainers/instructors observe the interaction of the committee while discussion and clarification of each task and duty area takes place.

The result of identifying and sequencing the tasks is a completed DACUM Chart which becomes the basis of the training program. The chart includes the names of committee members and date of the meeting. To help in scheduling revisions, annual reviews are recommended with major revisions at least every three years.

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Benefits of DACUM

In comparison with other occupational analysis techniques, DACUM has advantages of:

Time — DACUM requires one meeting of 6-10 incumbent workers usually 2-3 days.

Expense — A DACUM meeting is inexpensive requiring minimal resources of meeting room, supplies, postage and telephone.

Employment Community Involvement — The DACUM technique demonstrates the commitment of the education and training community to address employers' needs.

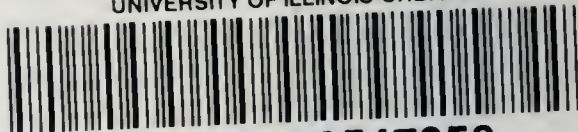
DACUM calls for a commitment by the employment community to improvement of training programs.

DACUM places the burden of defining skills needed on the employer.

Staff Development

Instructors make important community contacts in identifying committee members which often result in improved program advisory council membership. Instructors are invited to observe the committee's work where many conflicting organizational, process and equipment-related issues are discussed in detail. Instructors report this interchange to be most helpful in understanding the geographic and other factors affecting job differences which must be addressed in a training program.

Using DACUM lifts the burden of identifying an up-to-date set of tasks from the instructors and places the responsibility with the employing business and industry. The instructor can then be confident that the work he/she does to implement instruction is based on a solid foundation.



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DACUM Resources

Materials

The Illinois Vocational Curriculum Center (IVCC) and East Central Network (ECN) have resources on the DACUM process including a handbook produced by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE), and completed DACUM charts.

Training

Contact the East Central Network for information on upcoming training sessions in Illinois. ECN/IVCC offers an awareness workshop on request.

Facilitator Registry

The IVCC/ECN, in cooperation with the National Network for Curriculum Coordination in Vocational and Technical Education (NNCCVTE), has developed a Facilitator's Registry to assist in locating trained facilitators. For example a select group of Illinois teacher educators has been trained to infuse the technique in university teacher education programs and to act as facilitators.

Call or Write:

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